JULY 1971

# Labour Monthly

Editor: R. Palme Dutt

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## 1921

## 50th Anniversary

## 1971

**ARTICLES** · FIFTY YEARS ON: The Editor · TRADE UNIONS IN THE SEVENTIES: Dick Seabrook · DOUBLE ANNIVERSARY —AFRICAN PERSPECTIVE: Joe Slovo · THE SCIENTIFIC AND TECHNOLOGICAL REVOLUTION: Jürgen Kuczynski A WRITER IN THE IDEOLOGICAL JUNGLE: James Aldridge MARXIST THEORY IN THE WORLD OF ART: Alan Bush GOLDEN JUBILEE GREETINGS: Hugh Scanlon and many others

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# LABOUR MONTHLY

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## Notes of the Month

# FIFTY YEARS ON

**'We say to the workers: "You will have to go through fifteen, twenty, fifty years of civil wars and international wars, not only in order to change existing conditions, but in order to change yourselves and fit yourselves for political power".'**

MARX on the split in the Central Committee of the Communist League on September 15, 1850, between the ultra-revolutionary minority, who clamoured for immediate revolution in the situation of ebb after the revolutionary upsurge of 1848, and the majority, whose principal spokesmen were Marx and Engels: Marx's reproduction of his statement of September 15, 1850, was published in his *Revelations on the Communist Trial at Cologne*, in 1853: German edition of *Marx and Engels Collected Works*, Vol. 8, p. 412.

**'The dawn of a new, better society is rising for the oppressed classes of all countries and everywhere . . . an international proletarian army is being formed, and the next century will see its victory.'**

ENGELS, Message to the Socialist Party of Sicily, September, 28, 1894: German edition of *Marx and Engels Collected Works*, Vol. 22, pp. 476-7.

*June 14, 1971*

On this fiftieth anniversary of *Labour Monthly* we salute the fiftieth anniversary of the Communist Party of South Africa and the fiftieth anniversary of the Transport and General Workers Union. In this anniversary issue we are pursuing a different method from that on previous occasions. From the tenth to the forty-fifth anniversary we offered our readers a special edition in July, usually enlarged, to mark the occasion. But for this completion of half-a-century of unbroken publication—a record possibly without a parallel, past or present, for a militant socialist journal in any country of the capitalist world—our Anniversary Committee has produced, separately from this July issue, a *Golden Jubilee Souvenir*, where

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much that would have appeared in our July issue is included, with a history of the magazine, reproductions of old covers and cartoons, and greetings from a wide range of friends, British and international, and of trade unions and working class organisations, to constitute a permanent commemoration which may become a collector's piece. At the same time in this July issue, whose cover has been designed by Reg Turner, we have sought to provide within the limits of space available some studies of longer-term significance by recognised spokesmen on particular aspects of problems of our era. Joe Slovo of the South African Communist Party, whose fiftieth anniversary coincides exactly with ours in July, writes on the significance of this anniversary and the perspectives of the African liberation struggle. Dick Seabrook reviews the problems of trade unionism in the present stage of Britain's crisis. Jürgen Kuczynski throws a new light on the real issues raised by the scientific and technological revolution. In the cultural field James Aldridge examines the role of the writer in a changing society, and Alan Bush devotes his attention to the profoundly controversial questions of Marxist theory and the artist. Thus this July issue in its special character is a counterpart and accompaniment of the *Golden Jubilee Souvenir*.

**World in Movement**

Tennyson may have said: 'Better fifty years of Europe than a cycle of Cathay'; but he little guessed what was in store when he saw China as the pattern of immobility and repetition, and Europe as the locomotive of change in the world. Today the Chinese revolution, developing through successive phases over the past sixty years, is already in the twenty-second year of the victory of the socialist revolution, led by the Communist Party, which established the Chinese People's Republic; and whatever the growing pains and problems still to be solved, this extension of the world socialist revolution to one quarter of the earth's population, and establishment of the foundations of a socialist economy, is a historic development which has changed the balance of the world. Today a stage has been reached when great decisions are due to be made, both to promote the essential friendship and co-operation with all the other socialist countries, and to establish the rightful place of the Chinese People's Republic in international relations and in the United Nations. This is only one expression of the world transformation which has taken place and is continuing in our era. The dynamic of change has sped forward at an accelerating pace

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all over the world. In countries and regions which were formerly regarded by conventional opinion as doomed to backwardness and subjection the peoples are today pressing forward, despite all setbacks and blows of reaction, to build their lives anew independent of imperialism. Today the citadels of conservatism and reaction are in Western Europe and the United States, where the rulers still strive to maintain the status quo and stem the tide of revolution; but even here the dominion of reaction is increasingly challenged by the advancing strength of the working class and all progressive sections of the people. As we commemorate the record of fifty years, we are not primarily thinking of the journalistic record of a tiny periodical which has been no more than an atom in this mighty tide of advance. We are commemorating half a century of human achievement.

**Balance Sheet of Fifty Years**

When we began this magazine fifty years ago, this era of world transformation was still in its early stages. It was less than three years after the end of the first world war, whose outbreak had signalled the explosion of the contradictions of imperialism into the general crisis of capitalism. It was less than four years after the victory of the first socialist revolution, which opened the greatest leap forward in the history of mankind from the old class society to the new socialist order ending class exploitation and entering on the path to the future of communism. At that stage no one could have attempted to forecast the precise course and forms of the tremendous economic, technological, social and political events and developments which have transformed the world on a scale and at a pace of change without any parallel in any previous period of human history. But we were certain of the class orientation of the perspective. We were certain that our era was the era of the deepening contradictions of capitalism, however strong it might seem, preparing the conditions for its downfall, once the subjective political consciousness and organisation of the working class and the subject peoples was ready. We were certain that our era was the era of the world socialist revolution, which had begun and would advance in strength, whatever the initial difficulties and weaknesses from the inheritance of the old conditions or the assaults of the class enemy. This certainly enabled us to respond more closely and more accurately to the rapidly changing events of these fifty years than many who might have had more equipment for fuller information or contact with governing circles, but were blinded

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by their social background and class assumptions from understanding the currents of our era.

**Marxism Lives**

In vain the pedants and sophists are still as busy as ever today dissecting and disproving the 'fallacies of Marxism' in their text books and swelling proliferation of anti-Marxist diatribes. Often nowadays, with characteristic cunning engendered by their previous inability to win conviction, they seek to camouflage their anti-Marxism by professing to disentangle 'true Marxism' from the 'fallacies of communism' or the 'failure of communism'. The record of these fifty years is their answer. It is true that mankind has had to pass through heavy ordeals and suffering during these fifty years through the successive blows inflicted by the dying social order: the blows of mass unemployment and the world economic crisis; fascist barbarism; the second world war; and the chronic conditions of inflation and rising unemployment today. The peoples have had to suffer because the majority of the peoples were not yet subjectively ready for the decisive social change which was already vitally urgent from the objective conditions of half a century ago, and instead listened to the siren voices which offered a supposed easier path. They have had to learn, and are still having to learn, the hard way. The first socialist people, who had been ready and had won through, had also to suffer even more heavily because of the unreadiness of those who should have been their partners, and to face with immortal heroism the assaults of the class enemy and fascist barbarism; and in the course of the desperate struggle and merciless measures which successfully defeated these assaults, there were also those who suffered unjustly on their side. Today the agents of the old social order continue to inflict new horrors, with the shameful record of the murderous aggression and genocide against the heroic people of Vietnam and the peoples of Indo-China, or the terror let loose by the imperialist-subsidised rulers of Pakistan against the seventy-five millions of East Bengal, who sought by democratic means to proclaim their right to self-government and were rewarded with bombers and tanks leading to the tragedy of over five million refugees fleeing from their land. Nevertheless, through all these ordeals, which have been the harsh negative aspect of these fifty years, there can be no doubt of the decisive historical direction of change which has been accomplished in our era: the break-up of old empires; the extension of socialism from a single state to a third of the world; and the advance of socialism and national liberation

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to become the majority sector of the world, with imperialism, which once ruled the world, reduced to the minority sector. There are still plenty of problems to be solved; but they will be solved as previous even harder problems have been solved. The record and outcome of this half century has been the demonstration in life of the truth of the teachings and predictions of Marx, Engels and Lenin.

**Lessons of History**

Consider the contrast of the situation of the world immediately after the great watershed of 1917 and today. The Western victors after the first world war, regarding themselves as equipped with invincible military, economic and political power, and laying down their dictates for the world's future at Versailles, viewed with contemptuous disdain and antipathy the new regime fighting for its life in a war-ravaged, backward and largely illiterate country, wrestling with economic breakdown and bleeding from the subsidised civil wars and armies of intervention sent for its overthrow. The lords of the old social order sought to excommunicate the new social order; squelched even the proposal for a backstage meeting with its representatives at Prinkipo; sent their invading armies to destroy it; and, after their armies in revolt had failed to fulfil the set task to destroy the new power, imposed economic blockade and built their 'cordon sanitaire' of client states as their iron curtain to imprison the revolution. But in the outcome it was Versailles which went down in ruins, and the new socialist state which advanced in strength.

**Will They Never Learn?**

Has the lesson been learnt? The grand artificers of Versailles themselves tore up Versailles. Triumphant over German militarism, they had vowed in the Versailles Treaty to hold Germany disarmed for ever. Within a few years they were rearming German militarism and Nazism as a supposed all-powerful anti-communist weapon which would annihilate the socialist state and the influence of communism. Once again all their grand plans exploded in their face. The gangster they had armed brought them to the ultimate menace of destruction, and they had to turn to the strength of the socialist power to save them. They had to go through all the forms of welcoming the socialist power as an equal ally, even while they were at the same time plotting their future cold war against it. In the outcome of this second world war which their policies had thus unloosed, they saw their empires slipping, socialism extending

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from one to fourteen states, and the alliance of socialism and national liberation advancing all over the world. Had they learnt the lesson? Having vowed once again at Potsdam to hold Germany disarmed for ever, they returned once again to their old vomit, rearmed German militarism as the indispensable weapon against socialist power and the new socialist states. The reconstituted German army was soon to become the strongest army in capitalist Europe. They built up their encircling military alliances of Nato and Seato and Cento for the grand anti-Soviet aim. They spread their bases and troops all over the world They boasted of their nuclear monopoly, or, when they had to admit that that monopoly was gone, their all powerful nuclear superiority They dreamed of 'rolling back the tide of communism', undermining and overthrowing the new socialist states, and even had visions at the height of the mania of the Dulles era of overthrowing the state of socialism, and spread in millions of copies their literature proclaiming the date in the early fifties for the coming GI occupation of Moscow. Today the United States and the Soviet Union consult as equals on the possibilities of arms limitation; and while the hawks of the Pentagon and Nato and British Toryism utter their dire warnings, the peoples of the world look hopefully for the possibility of such agreement. It is indeed time for the lesson of these fifty years to be learnt.

**Poison of Anti-Communism**

Why has this outcome of fifty years shown such a succession of bankruptcies of all the grand plans and policies of the statesmen of Western imperialism, from Clemenceau and Poincaré and Lloyd George to Hitler, Chamberlain and Home, or to Dulles and L. B. Johnson, right up to the visible cross-purposes and dilemmas of President Nixon and his strategy today? At the outset the Western statesmen had all the advantages of superior wealth and resources, overwhelming military power and armaments, highly developed technical and productive power, control of the world's main raw materials, and long political and diplomatic experience. But all their splendour suffered from a fatal flaw. They represented a dying social order trying to arrest the advance of history. When they sent their armies against the new social order, their soldiers and sailors revolted, and the workers acted to stop the supply of guns. When they planned to exploit their control of the world's raw material resources, they found the peoples rising in revolt against them to demand possession of their own countries. Haunted by the spectre of social revolution, a hundred times more than

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when Marx had diagnosed the deadly fear of the spectre a century and a quarter ago, since 1917 they have identified their spectre with the first socialist state.

**Fatal Schizophrenia**

This obsession has tangled up all their old skill in the professional arts of international diplomacy and manoeuvre. Before the 1914 war British diplomacy during the preceding decade had directed its efforts with single-minded concentration against a single visible main enemy: the challenge of the rising German imperialism to British world supremacy. For this aim the previous long-standing conflicts of interest with France and Russia as traditional enemies were patched up. During the decade before 1914 British diplomacy had pursued with single-minded skill, concealing its successive moves, not only from the people and parliament, but even from the majority of the Cabinet, to build up the military alliance of the Anglo-French Entente and the Anglo-Russian Treaty, and thus ensure a superior military combination against the challenge of German imperialism as the main enemy. But after 1917 the still continuing conflicts of imperialism over the division and redivision of the world became entangled and complicated by concurrent anti-Soviet plotting, which was even seen as the main aim by many in high places. Hence could arise at particular moments conspicuous tactical divergencies among the exponents of ruling class foreign policy, as between Chamberlain and Churchill in the late nineteen-thirties. The result throughout the whole modern era since 1917 has been a chronic schizophrenia of imperialist international policy, typically expressed in relation to Germany with the successive stages of disarming and then rearming, then disarming again and then rearming again.

**Time to Cut the Canker**

This canker has continuously poisoned the atmosphere of international relations and has repeatedly thwarted the attempts of those like Franklin D. Roosevelt who made a serious effort to come to terms with the modern world. But the realisation is spreading today, not only in popular opinion, but also in a significant section of ruling class circles that this obsession is a menace to international peace and to the international co-operation which modern world conditions make increasingly essential, and is contrary to the true interests of all nations irrespective of social system. Marxism has always taught that the world socialist revolution is no single sudden

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event, but a prolonged process, with the parallel existence of different countries at different stages of development. Marxism has always taught that revolution cannot be exported, but can only be the outcome of the conditions and experience of the people within each country. Today the realisation is extending among wide sections that the formula originally put forward from the side of socialism, on the basis of this Marxist understanding, for peaceful co-existence of states with differing social systems, with recognition of the rights of national independence of all peoples, corresponds to the interests of all peoples at every stage of development, and is indispensable to hold off the menace of a new and incalculably destructive world war.

**Whose 'Wind of Change'?**

It is characteristic that even when the statesmen of Western imperialism have shown sufficient realism to make concessions to the currents of the modern era, as in their concessions—in practice enforced concessions after the failure of many colonial wars and of a vast apparatus of repression to crush the popular movements—to the advance of national liberation and formation of new independent states in the former colonial territories, their boasts of this 'enlightened' policy are couched in terms of the old anti-communist obsession. Thus the famous 'wind of change' speech of Premier Macmillan in South Africa in 1960, proclaiming the necessity of recognising the new African national consciousness and formation of African independent states in former colonial territories, is today frequently quoted as an example of enlightened statesmanship. But in fact, if the full text is examined the new policy was presented within the context of the old basic anti-communist obsession. In his speech in Cape Town in the Assembly House on February 3, 1960, after a month-long tour of Africa, Macmillan said:

> The most striking of all the impressions I have formed since I left London a month ago is the strength of this African national consciousness. . . . The wind of change is blowing through the continent. . . . We must all accept it as a fact. Our national policies must take account of it. I sincerely believe that if we cannot do so, we may imperil the precise balance of East and West. . . . As I see it, the great issue in this second half of the twentieth century is whether the uncommitted peoples of Asia and Africa will swing to the East or West. Will they be drawn into the communist camp?

Thus the 'great issue' is not seen as the issue of national liberation and the rights of the newly independent peoples to determine their own future, but is envisaged as a battle between imperialism and

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communism over the bodies of the newly independent peoples. The advance of national liberation is seen in terms of the menace of communism. But this in turn becomes the very conception which is currently used to justify every aggressive colonial war against national liberation, most notably in the US war of aggression against the people of Vietnam, as a supposed 'defensive' war against the 'menace of communism.'

**Nato at Lisbon**

Today a new international situation is opening out, with a critical moment of choice between alternative future paths. The old strategic conception which found expression in the organisation of Nato under American leadership as an anti-Soviet bloc, with a rearmed West Germany as its main military base, and with American troops of occupation and nuclear weapons in West Germany and Britain, is becoming visibly bankrupt. This bankruptcy found revealing expression in the contradictions and cross-currents of policy at the recent meeting of Nato foreign ministers at Lisbon in June. It was indeed a revealing irony at the outset that the chosen central meeting place for Nato, as the supposed organisation for the 'defence' of the 'free world', should be Lisbon, the citadel of fascism and colonialism. And indeed the Danish representative had already protested against the choice of Lisbon. But this was only the beginning of the divergencies revealed. The central issue was how to meet the repeated proposals from the Soviet Union and the Warsaw Pact countries for a mutual reduction of forces in Europe and for a European Security Conference. All such previous proposals had been met with a solid negative resistance from the side of Nato. But now open divergencies had developed within the ranks of Nato.

**New Trends**

These divergencies not only found expression in the aspirations of some of the smaller countries, such as Denmark and Norway. They also found most powerful expression in the policies of the major powers. France had already cleared out American forces of occupation and adopted a policy of separation from the military machinery of Nato. West Germany, under Chancellor Brandt, was trying out an alternative to the bankruptcy of the negative policies of Adenauer, had thrown overboard the Hallstein Doctrine, and in pursuit of the new watchword of developing an *Ostpolitik* had initialled treaties with the Soviet Union and Poland, though still refusing to recognise the German Democratic Republic. Even more significant were the

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new trends of policy of the US to conduct direct negotiations with the Soviet Union for a mutual reduction of forces and limitation of armaments. The open call by Senator Fulbright for immediate halving of American forces in Europe was indeed rejected by President Nixon; but it was obvious that this public demand voiced by Senator Fulbright was in reality a pacemaker for a direction of policy towards which US strategy was in practice moving, with the insistence that more of the burdens of Nato should be borne by its European members.

**Tory 'Alarm-Signals'**

In face of all these new trends the old Diehards of Nato, led by British Toryism (the British representative at Lisbon was characteristically Home of Munich) in association with the military circles in West Germany, represented by the West German Christian-Democrat Minister Schmidt, fascist Portugal, and the Nato-created Colonels' regime in Greece, sounded the alarm. Under the title 'Snare for Nato', the *Daily Telegraph* on June 3 opened its assault:

> President Nixon caused some consternation among the Nato ministers assembled in Lisbon by his breezy and optimistic reference to 'mutual and balanced reduction of forces' by Nato and Russia. He gave the impression that major negotiations were likely to start soon and that the issues were clear-cut, adding to the sense of urgency by saying he was ready to 'go any place' if negotiations with Russia made a top-level meeting necessary. This has been interpreted in some quarters as meaning that Mr Nixon envisaged the possibility of direct Russo-American negotiations at some stage, and perhaps a personal meeting with the Russian leaders.
>
> Howls of outraged indignation would rise from the 13 corners of Nato Europe if he really had meant this. . . . Mr Nixon was apparently thinking of possible visits to meet European leaders—presumably to read the riot act.

Here the 'howls of outraged indignation' voiced by the Tory press organ reflected the battle of policy which is developing between the Diehard advocates of the old cold-war strategy and those who have come to recognise the bankruptcy of the old strategy and the necessity of a new approach to international relations.

**Europe's Future**

The future of Europe, and with it of the world, is involved in this battle of basic international policy. At Lisbon a compromise communiqué was patched up, in which the old Diehards of the cold war were only able to maintain their negative line by wrapping it up in a host of vague, verbose formulations about 'conversations intended

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to lead to a conference on security and co-operation in Europe'; 'preparations for discussions on the substance and procedures of possible East-West negotiations'; 'to continue and intensify explorations with the Soviet Union'; 'intention to move as soon as may be practical to negotiations'; 'willingness to appoint at the appropriate time a representative or representatives for conducting further exploratory talks with the Soviet Government'. But inside this fog of phrases the real hard substance was the emphasis on the obstacles to prevent progress. For this purpose the issue of West Berlin (repeated no less than seven times) was treated as the talisman to prevent progress, with the insistence that a pre-condition for any East-West negotiations or European Conference must be acceptance of the formulation of the Western powers on West Berlin, including the demand for recognition of the illegal 'relationship between the Western sectors and Federal Republic which had developed with the approval of the three Governments.' But the Lisbon outcome is not the last word. The choice is between the maintenance of the division of Europe into opposing military blocs, with all the dangers and burdens which this entails, or the adoption of concrete steps, through direct East-West negotiations and a European Security Conference, for the relaxation of tension, mutual reduction of forces, possible development of a nuclear-free zone, leading to the eventual parallel phasing out, as always proposed by the socialist states, of the sectional military blocs and their replacement by a single European Security Treaty, conforming to the United Nations Charter on regional security agreements.

**'European Unity'**

It is characteristic that the champions and instigators of the division of Europe should now endeavour to conceal their identity by brandishing the slogan 'European unity'. It should be recalled that it was the Western powers which initiated the division of Europe by establishing the sectional military bloc of Nato in 1949, and the division of Germany in order to draw a rearmed Western Germany into Nato. It was only after the completion of the rearmament of West Germany in 1954, to function as a member of the sectional Nato military bloc, that the Warsaw Pact was organised in 1955, six years after Nato, as a defensive answer. It is thus a crowning insolence that the apostles of the policy of the division of Europe, for the development of a closed economic-political-military bloc of West European capitalist states through the Common Market and Nato, on the basis of a minority of European states, should have the

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effrontery to describe this policy as a policy of 'European unity', and now be seeking to bamboozle the British people into accepting their further integration, through entry into the Common Market, into this system of the division of Europe as a policy of 'European unity'. This is really a case where the legislation against misleading trade names should justify a prosecution.

**From Munich to the Common Market**

The reckless determination of the Government of Heath and Home to bulldoze Britain in a hurry into the Common Market, in face of the overwhelming majority opposition of public opinion, is the counterpart and continuation of the policy of the Government of Chamberlain and Home at Munich, which led Britain to the edge of disaster. Chamberlain was ready to sacrifice the vital interests of the British people, and to risk the future of Britain's national independence, in order to fulfil his reactionary aim of building up the four-power West European bloc counterposed against the Soviet Union. The only electoral opportunity for the British people to express their viewpoint before Munich was the general election of 1935 which the Tories won on the basis of a pledge to maintain unyielding adherence to collective security against fascist aggression. No wonder today the Heath Government is so determined to prevent a general election before a final decision is taken on entry into the Common Market; the experience of the local elections and Bromsgrove is sufficient evidence of what would happen. In the outcome of Munich Britain was only saved from the fate of France by the sturdy refusal of the British people to accept capitulation, and by the strength of the Soviet Union which finally played the decisive role in destroying the common enemy. But the policy of the Heath Government to rush Britain into the Common Market in direct disregard to the overwhelming majority opposition of the people in Britain is in fact a continuation of the basic policy of Munich at a more advanced stage.

**Political Aim of Common Market Campaign**

Faced with the universal popular recognition that entry into the Common Market would sharply accelerate the already record rise in prices and place heavy burdens on every household, its propagandists seek to put forward the argument that the real issue is not just economic, but political. In this they are right in a sense which they do not mean. The policy of aligning Britain in the Common Market represents a political aim of the most powerful forces of

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Tory reaction, as well as an economic aim of supra-national big monopolies. It is a continuation of the policy of Munich in the nineteen-thirties and of Locarno in the nineteen-twenties, expressing the ceaseless repetition of the aim of a West European capitalist bloc which has been the dream of every reactionary politician in Europe during the whole era since 1917. But the battle is not finished. In face of the failure to win public conviction on the issue, the propaganda technique of the Tory Government is to endeavour to hypnotise the people into accepting entry by creating the impression that it is inevitable, that the issue is already settled, that there will be no question of a referendum or election on the issue, that the Government is determined to go ahead, and that the only sensible course is to recognise the facts. On the contrary. The key time of decision is in the months immediately ahead. The mobilisation of the full strength of the popular opposition to this disastrous policy of entry into the Common Market can still be effective. And it is here that the role of the labour movement is of decisive importance.

**British Labour's Hour of Choice**

The greatest responsibility now falls on all sections of the industrial and political labour movement. The experience of the first year of the Tory Government should have disillusioned those who may have imagined that disgust with the right-wing policies of the late Labour Government could be usefully expressed by electoral abstention, allowing the Tories to come to power, instead of carrying forward and strengthening the fight for left policies and left unity. Seldom have the blows of the capitalist offensive fallen so heavily on the conditions of the people as during these twelve months. The accelerating inflation through government policies expressed in the sharpest rise in prices for any comparable period since the war; the increased burdens of taxation for the masses of the people, alongside reductions for the wealthy; ruthless cuts in every field of social provision; the throttling of production to such an extent that the total product has actually fallen in the first quarter of this year, with the consequent grim total of the number of unemployed rising to levels which have begun to recall the inter-war years, and affecting wide sections who had never thought to be unemployed. But at the same time the anger, class solidarity and militancy of the workers has found expression in the wage struggles which have alarmed the Government and increased their determination to put through their vicious trade union bill. The slump in the Tory vote equally shows the political disillusionment of the people.

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**Two Pivotal Issues**

In this situation the key necessity is to unite all the forces of the industrial and political working class movement in order to defeat these policies, and to prepare the way to force an election and bring down the Government. The two key issues which now reach their decisive moment in the immediate coming months are the issues of the Common Market and the Trade Union Bill. It is on both these that the strength of the labour movement can be decisive. On the Common Market it is essential to end the delaying tactics, which only play into the hands of the Tory Government, to convene the Special Conference with all speed, reach a firm decision for opposition and mobilise the campaign to demand a general election for the verdict of the people before a decision is reached on entry. On the Trade Union Bill it is essential to overcome the dangerous trends after the Special TUC for different unions to move to different currents of policy, notably on the key question of registration, which could disintegrate the united strength of the trade union opposition to the bill. The whole character of this offensive of the Tory Government shows that only the full united strength of the trade union movement can defeat this bill, which represents the heaviest offensive against trade unionism since its earliest days, and at a time when the organised strength of the trade unions is higher than ever before. The battle over these key issues of the Trade Union Bill and the Common Market comes to a head in these immediate next months.

**Climax of Fifty Years—Time of Testing**

In the first issue of the first volume of this magazine for July 1921 we expressed the opinion:

> The present time of trial is putting the organisation of Labour in every country to the severest test it has experienced since the beginning of the war. In every country it is being found that the organisation of Labour is inadequate to the tasks that now confront it. Lack of co-ordination, cumbrous machinery, sectional division, an absence of foresight and strategic policy, are again and again leading to disastrous results. The reorganisation of the whole labour movement on a scale adequate to the problems before it has now become the first practical question in every country.

Much has been achieved and learned during these fifty years. But the biggest tasks still lie ahead in Britain and the British labour movement. Alike in the international situation and in Britain the outcome of these fifty years have brought a time of testing, when critical decisions are due to be taken which will be of governing importance for the new period ahead. **R.P.D.**

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# TRADE UNIONS IN THE SEVENTIES

Dick Seabrook*
President
Union of Shop, Distributive and Allied Workers

IN 1971 the British trade union movement is stronger numerically and more united organisationally than at any time in the whole of its previous history. It also faces dangers to its continued existence under one centralised leadership greater than any since the unions first came together to form the Trades Union Congress in 1868, and new problems of a greater magnitude than have ever presented themselves before are pressing for solution.

In 1921—the year *Labour Monthly* was founded—membership affiliated to the TUC was 6,417,910 in 213 unions, represented at Congress by 810 delegates; from that point numbers fell year by year to reach their lowest level in 1934 at 3,294,581 in 210 unions, represented at Congress by 575 delegates. Since then the record has been one of fairly steady growth in membership and number of delegates to reach 9,402,170 and 1,061 respectively in 1970. Affiliated membership in 1971 is likely for the first time to be within touching distance of ten million; the affiliation of the National and Local Government Officers' Association and the National Union of Teachers means that no major union now remains outside the TUC; due to mergers and amalgamations the number of unions affiliated has dropped to 150. The structure of membership has also changed radically as the huge memberships of the unions in the old basic industries, mining, rails and textiles, has gone rapidly down due to decline and reorganisation of their industries, and the development of new industries and new processes, motor vehicles, petrochemicals, road transport, has given greater strength and influence —and a new outlook—to other unions.

There is, however, still an enormous job to be done by way of increasing membership and strengthening organisation in very important areas of employment where union membership is weak or even non-existent, and where pay and conditions are a disgrace and menace not only to those who work under them but the whole of the rest of the movement. There is a great need for a co-ordinated plan to tackle this problem, and it is encouraging to know that the

* Dick Seabrook, whose union, USDAW, is the sixth-largest in Britain, gives here some personal views.

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first steps are already being taken to this end by the TUC.

The need for further radical development of the changes already agreed in TUC structure and authority hardly require emphasis. Unions in the public service sector are already moving towards co-ordinated action in the submission and processing of wage and salary claims. Common justice as well as elementary trade union solidarity demands that more support be given by all unions to the fight of the lowest-paid to overcome their difficulties and disadvantages. They must not be left to fight alone. And women workers fighting for speedier implementation of equal pay and equal opportunities are also entitled to greater support than has so far been forthcoming.

Not only is there need for greater co-ordination of union activities in different sectors of the economy on a national scale, but the growth of the so-called multi-national company is also driving towards co-ordinated action on an international scale. The first steps in this direction have already been made in connection with certain industries and companies. This development is bound to raise sharply the question of relationships between unions in different countries (France, Italy, etc.) representing workers in the same international firm or group, but affiliated to different internationals, e.g. the World Federation of Trade Unions and the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions. The harsh realities of life demand that the gaps and divisions which have kept unions in different countries isolated from one another shall be bridged, and the barriers to full and free international contact and association be removed. In the international field also, more could and should be done to assist those fighting for elementary trade union rights and liberties in such countries as South Africa, Spain, Greece and elsewhere.

It is of the utmost importance that the greater unity created in recent years, and carried forward by the campaign against the Labour Government's White Paper, *In Place of Strife*, and even more by the campaign against the present Government's Industrial Relations Bill should not be dissipated. Opponents of the trade union movement are clearly seeking ways and means of undermining this greater unity, of splitting and dividing the movement in order to weaken and destroy it as a movement before proceeding to defeat us one by one. Robert Carr was reported in the *Guardian* of June 4 as declaring in an interview published in the *Director*: '. . . I think employers in Britain ought to give much more thought to co-ordinating their wage-bargaining, and to developing counter-acting power to match that of the unions.'

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Whilst British trade unionists have been slowly and hesitantly achieving a greater degree of strength and unity, control of the British economy has by the process of merger and take-over been passing rapidly into the hands of fewer and fewer, larger and larger corporations. The TUC Economic Review for 1971 in paragraph 150 illustrates the process:

> A Monopolies Commission paper . . . estimated that in the 11 years to 1968 the number of 'large' companies in British industry and commerce fell by nearly two-fifths, from 2,024 to 1,253. Out of those, the 40 largest companies, which in 1957 had accounted for 35 per cent of the net assets of all such 'large' companies, had by 1968 enormously increased their share to 49 per cent of total net assets. In terms of assets taken over, these 40 largest companies accounted for 54 per cent of all assets acquired through take-overs and mergers in those years. The second 40 biggest companies had increased their share of total net assets from 9 per cent in 1957 to 14 per cent in 1968 and accounted for 12 per cent of all assets taken over through acquisitions of other companies. So, taken together, the 80 biggest companies accounted for *two-thirds* of all assests acquired through take-overs in the decade to 1968, and by 1968 held 63 per cent of all 'large' company assets.

Paragraph 151 says:

> The same Monopolies Commission study . . . estimated that the net assets of the 10 largest UK based foreign-owned manufacturing companies in 1968 were £1,143 million, compared with about £400 million in 1957.

And Paragraph 156 says:

> The seriousness of the inflationary forces stemming in 1971 from uncontrolled price increases of major firms operating with an important degree of monopoly power cannot be under-estimated. There are no signs even of an increased use of the Monopoly Commission as a partial offset to this wholesale removal of instruments of public accountability, and no guarantees that the present Monopolies Commission could cope swiftly even if it were given the opportunity. Thus at the very moment when the Conservative Government plans to enmesh the trade unions in a vast list of restrictions and penalties, it has reduced to a derisory level the elements of public scrutiny over the giant firms which dominate the economy.

Some Labour politicians have complained that it was the new wave of militancy which swept the trade unions from autumn 1969 onwards which either caused or contributed to Labour's defeat in the June 1970 election. Up to the municipal elections of last May, whilst Labour Party individual membership, state of constituency organisation, councillors, MPs and votes were all falling, membership of trade unions, degree of strength and unity and achievements for members were all rising. It has been traditional in Britain for

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the trade union movement to be the 'front-runner' for the entire labour movement, the main foundation on which much of the rest of the movement has rested. Governments have come, and Governments have gone, but the trade union movement has continued its unceasing fight to maintain and improve the living and working conditions of working people of Britain and their families. The Labour Government's preoccupation with getting a favourable balance of payments position demanded heavy sacrifices from working people, created high and rising unemployment (which has continued under the Tories), imposed considerable restraints on union activity and led directly to Labour's defeat in June 1970. The workers turned to direct trade union action, however, and in a series of industrial disputes affecting sections of workers never before involved in action of this kind, or not for a very long time, starting with the dustmen in the autumn of 1969 and going on through 1970 and into 1971 with the Leeds clothing workers, British Leyland, the miners, the teachers, the postmen, and so on, won improvements in pay and conditions to compensate for and offset the sacrifices demanded by the Labour Government.

The present Government by budget policy and decisions has already stolen back most of the improvements won in order to give their friends and supporters massive gifts by way of tax concessions. The people's reaction to this can be seen in the resounding defeat inflicted on Government candidates in the municipal elections and in the by-elections which have so far taken place. Having come to power with 13 million votes for them and 15 million against, already they have lost the confidence of many who voted for them, and they cease to have any claim whatsoever to represent a majority of the people of this country. They function more openly than ever now as what in any case they have always been, a Government of the big corporations which dominate our economic life, the big industrialists, the big financiers and the big landlords and property-owners. The Government's policy and strategy is designed to serve the interests of the dominant members of this small but powerful group, and it seems they are not much concerned for the moment who else goes under so long as they and their interests survive. As Vic Feather said at the Scottish Miners' Annual Gala Day in Edinburgh on June 5, 'the Government is leading the country to economic disaster'—but the biggest of the big intend that it shall be a disaster for others and a bonanza for them!

In this situation a co-ordinated programme and strategy is called for across the whole field of the labour and trade union movement.

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The fight is on for the redistribution of the national income in favour of the working people, of the wealth producers as against the money-lenders. It cannot be won without major changes in the structure of our economic life and the conduct of our political affairs. It is possible to defeat the present Government long before the end of its normal period of office. But there is no enthusiasm to do this if another Labour Government is to follow policies similar to those which led to the defeat of the last. If Harold Wilson and the last Government when in difficulties had introduced some genuinely socialist measures and appealed to trade unionists and the labour movement to come out on to the streets in support of the Government and the socialist measures, I am convinced the response would have made the great demonstrations against the present Government's Industrial Relations Bill, including the huge TUC march in London on February 21, look like outings of the Ramblers' Association.

Experience continues to show everywhere that this old system of capitalism cannot find the answers to the new and pressing problems of our times. Growing homelessness and at the same time growing unemployment among building workers; people in many parts of the world dying of starvation and disease while plant, capacity and men to tackle the problems that would end poverty and disease stand idle; we are training more students to university standard and making it harder for them to find employment up to the standard of their training; and overall the enormous burdens of armaments that oppress the peoples of all lands, menace their security and prosperity instead of defending them; pollution spreading everywhere and resources of the world vital to the health and progress of the world's people wasted and frittered away uselessly in some countries.

Trade unions were first created in Britain by an instinctive, natural reaction of workers fighting to protect themselves and their families from the worst, most barbarous effects of the industrial revolution. In spite of all the ups and downs which at times have weakened them, strengthened them, reorganised and reinvigorated them, they have been maintained only as a result of very great determination and sacrifices by an enormous number of devoted men and women. There is no doubt that the seventies will face the British trade union movement with some of the biggest problems and challenges it has ever had to meet. There can equally be no doubt, because a stronger, even more united, more vigorous and more successful trade union movement is essential to the further progress of British working men and women, that that greater strength and unity will be achieved.

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# DOUBLE ANNIVERSARY—AFRICAN PERSPECTIVE

Joe Slovo

THE launching of *Labour Monthly* in July 1921 coincided with the formation of South Africa's Communist Party: the first on the continent of Africa. This double anniversary has significance beyond the coincidence of date. It was part of the post-October strivings of the various detachments of the international labour movement to create new theoretical and organisational frameworks for the struggle against imperialism, the advance towards socialism and the defence of the first workers' state.

In its very first issue *Labour Monthly* thundered against the 'appalling cruelties' and ravages of imperialism on the African continent and exposed the so-called 'sacred trust' of British colonial administration as being exercised on behalf of the economic interests of imperialism and the white settler*. But what the Establishment chooses to call the 'traditional ties' between Britain and South Africa began increasingly to express itself at the other, and more meaningful, level: at the level of a growing sector of the British labour movement which broke with big power domination and made common cause with the colonial world. *Labour Monthly*'s half century of analytical evangelism in the cause of socialism and the colonial people everywhere won it and R.P.D. a special place in the affection of the South African revolutionary movement. In the early war days, when the importation of *Labour Monthly* into South Africa was banned, the South African Party evaded the prohibition by reprinting and circulating a number of issues of R.P.D.'s 'Notes of the Month'.

The face of the world, and with it Africa, has changed since the July days of 1921. The then beleaguered first workers' state proved to be the starting point for the emergence of socialist forms of government on a world scale and most of the plundered African continent has taken significant strides towards asserting its independence and sovereignty. It is no doubt true that even in politically independent Africa foreign control has not been finally eradicated. But, whilst imperialism has sought to continue its domination by other means, it has been compelled to do so from weakness rather than strength and the new conditions in which it

* 'Economic Imperialism and the "Sacred Trust" ', by Leonard Woolf, *Labour Monthly*, Vol 1, No. 1, July 1921.

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is forced to operate create problems for imperialism (more or less severe in different countries) which are not insignificant.

Although most of the Third World—including Africa—is still part of the capitalist economic system, it does have a degree of independent political choice which, reinforced by support from the socialist world, has in fact often asserted itself. But many complexities and weaknesses remain. They stem from a legacy of material backwardness, an imbalance in economic development and the consequent inchoate state of class stratification. The process of class formation gives a special stamp to the dynamics of struggle in many parts of Africa and the classical tendencies are sometimes reversed with control over the instruments of production often being competed for via political control of the administration.

The relationship between national and class struggle, between the continuing fight for true national independence and the question of which class is gaining hegemony internally remains a challenging theoretical and practical problem which can only be effectively dealt with by indigenous Marxist vanguard groupings. The absence of such groupings in most of politically independent Africa is an obvious source of grave weakness.

The white oligarchy in the South with its mirror image in Zimbabwe and its Portuguese allies remains dominant, if not unchallenged, in its citadels. It has become the last outpost of direct, unashamed domination in the old style and constitutes a threat and a challenge to the gains of the African revolution.

The unabated struggle to resist and destroy foreign domination has given birth to movements rich in revolutionary experience. The emergence of a modern proletariat in the most developed part of our continent understandably led to the creation of the continent's first Marxist-workers' organisation—the Communist Party of South Africa. In the course of its long history the SACP has elaborated its own theory of the South African revolution—the most concise and all-round definition of which is contained in its programme, *The Road to South African Freedom*, which was adopted in 1962 at an underground conference.

Between the first conference on July 30, 1921, and the 1962 conference, a fundamental reshaping had taken place in the Communist approach to many of the basic problems of the South African revolution: its theory and its strategy and tactics. In regard to some particulars the changes were in response to a changing situation. But in regard to others the changing situation served only to put in question some earlier assumptions about the fundamental

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character of the political conflict, the main forces of change and indeed the precise character and role of the Party itself. The earlier conference posited, as an immediate task, an advance to a classless society with the industrial workers—then predominantly white—providing the 'stormtroops' of the approaching revolution. The 1962 programme set out a perspective of a national democratic revolution whose main content is the liberation of the African people.

It was, of course, exceedingly difficult for those early Communists —brave men and utterly selfless in the cause of socialism—to recognise in that incipient stage of class and national stratification, the true character of the process that was taking place. After all the white worker had not yet won for himself the almost unconditional place at the ruler's table which he has today, and he was driven, in his undoubted militancy, by a mixture of motives and aims which included a blurred rejection of capitalism. The black worker neither had effective industrial organisation nor a national consciousness or national movement which held out a promise of revolutionary upsurge.

The 1962 programme represents a synthesis of the various tendencies in the movement relating to class struggle and the struggle for national liberation. This synthesis is based on the belief that just as it is impossible to conceive of workers' power in South Africa without national liberation so it is impossible to conceive of national liberation without at least some radical socialist solutions. The broad coincidence of aims between the Communist Party and the national liberation movement is the culmination of a long historical process. The Communist Party moved away from the arid cry for soviet power which ignored the national element, and the national movement advanced from its wishy washy, cap-in-hand nationalism. The process was a two-way one and the mutual impact of the working class and national movements is in evidence today both in the programmatic sphere and in the close working relationship which has evolved between all sectors of the revolutionary movement.

The programme at one and the same time proclaims the vanguard character of the SACP and the primary national organisation—the African National Congress—as standing at the head of the liberation alliance. Have South African Communists gone so far in their embrace of the national factor that they have abrogated their traditional claim to be a vanguard Party? Only doctrinaire reasoning would lead to such a conclusion. If the main content of South Africa's revolution is the liberation of the nationally oppressed

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majority, true vanguardism demands a strategy and an amalgam of political forces which reflect this reality.

The existence of an independent Marxist vanguard in South Africa has proved to be an indispensable political instrument not only for the working class but also for the broad mass of the nationally oppressed people.

The complex interplay of class and national factors which occurs in its sharpest form in the South demanded profound theoretical and practical solutions. Africa is of course a varied continent with localised conditions. Valid generalisations about specific areas can, in the last resort, only properly be made by indigenous revolutionary movements. But the experience of the South African Communist Party especially on the relationship between class and national factors and the crucial role of a Marxist Party, has a broad relevance which extends beyond the confines of South Africa's borders.

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**PUBLICATIONS RECEIVED**

*Diplomacy of Aggression*, V. Issraeljan and L. Kutakov. Progress Publishers (Central Books), 438 pp., £1.25.

*The British Academics*, A. H. Halsey and Martin Trow. Faber, 560 pp., £5.

*Democracy*, Dorothy Pickles. Methuen, 200 pp., 90p.

*The English and Immigration*, John A. Garrard. Oxford University Press, 244 pp., £3.25.

*Intelligence, Psychology and Education*, Brian Simon. Lawrence & Wishart, 280 pp., £3.

*The Apparatus of the Law* (*Law, Class and Society*, Book 2), D. N. Pritt. Lawrence & Wishart, 128 pp., £2.

*The Paris Commune 1871*, Stewart Edwards. Eyre & Spottiswoode, 418 pp., £4.50.

*The Politics of Government Growth*, William C. Lubenov. David & Charles, 238 pp., £3.50.

*The History of Working Class Housing*, edited by Stanley D. Chapman. David & Charles, 308 pp., £4.75.

*Society of the Future*, August Bebel. Progress Publishers (Central Books), 154 pp., 20p.

*Soviet Union Today*, N. Georgiyev. Progress Publishers (Central Books), 174 pp., 30p.

*Socialist Society: Scientific Principles of Development*, G. Glezerman. Progress Publishers (Central Books), 272 pp., 75p.

*Lenin's Ideas Transform the World*, various contributors. Novosti Press Agency, 324 pp., 50p.

*Leninism and the World Revolutionary Working-Class Movement*, various contributors. Progress Publishers (Central Books), 496 pp., £1.25.

*A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy*, Karl Marx. Lawrence & Wishart, 264 pp., £1.50.

*The Life of Robert Owen Written by Himself*, introduced by John Butt. Charles Knight, 250 pp.,£3.

*Through the Bridewell Gate*, Tom MacIntyre. Faber, 220 pp., £2.25.

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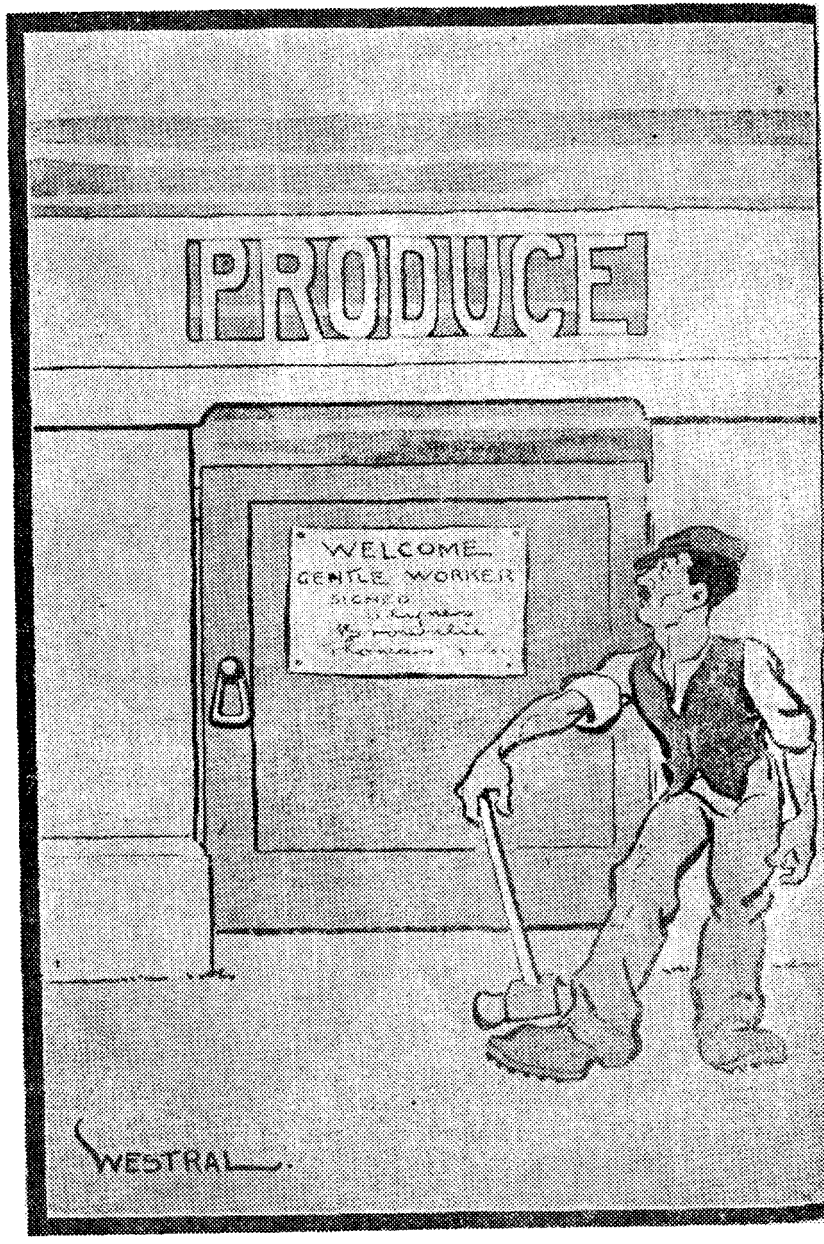


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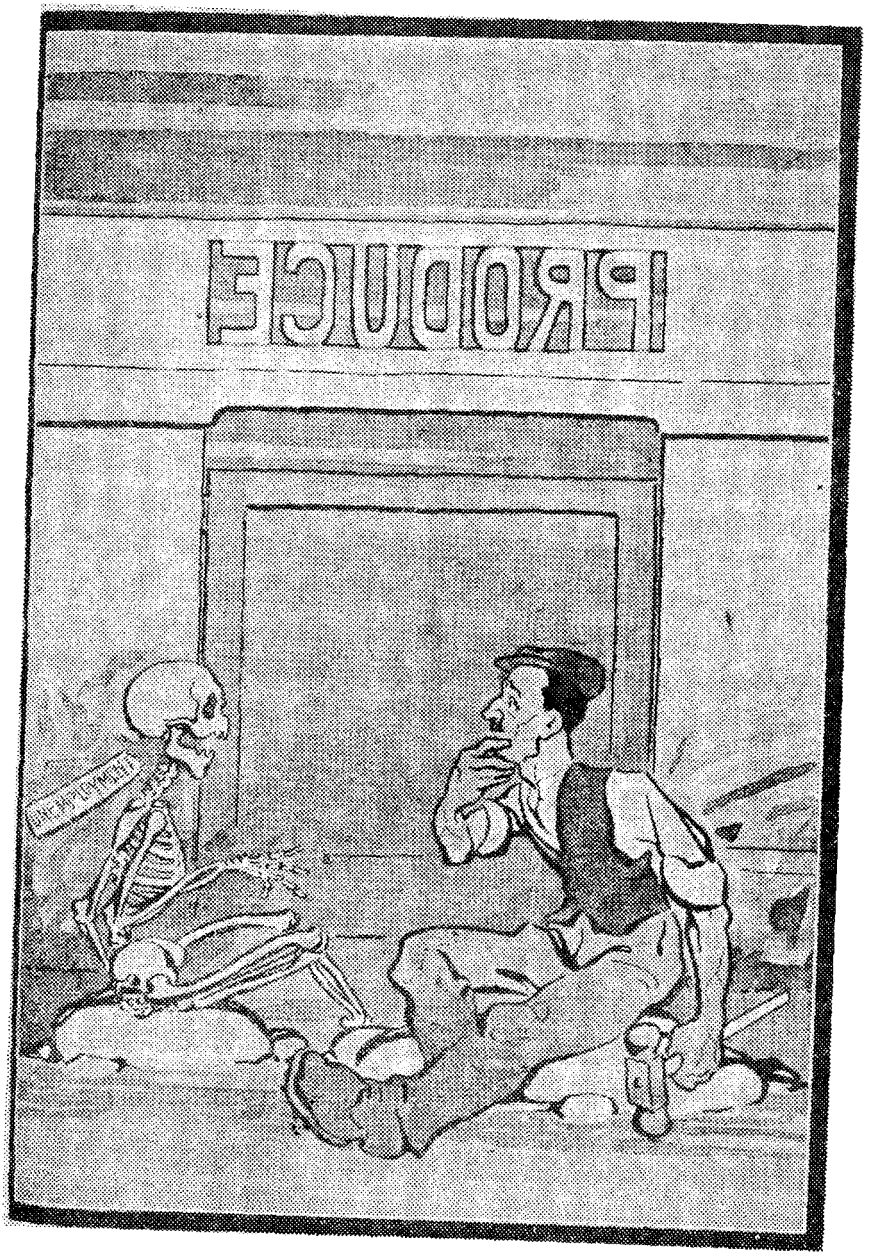


**BOTH SIDES OF IT**

Reproduced from *The Communist*, January 20, 1921

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# FIFTIETH ANNIVERSARY GREETINGS

In the 'Labour Monthly Golden Jubilee Souvenir', which was on sale at our reception on June 16, greetings have been printed from Tony Ambatielos—Representative Abroad of the Greek Patriotic Anti-dictatorship Front (PAM); Professor J. D. Bernal; Sydney Bidwell MP; Lord Brockway; Alan Bush; Rt Hon Richard Crossman MP; Lawrence Daly—General Secretary of the National Union of Mineworkers; Maurice Dobb; Michael Foot MP; Moses Kotane—General Secretary of the Communist Party of South Africa; Hertta Kuusinen—Finnish MP and President of the Women's International Democratic Federation; Sir Compton Mackenzie; Malcolm Muggeridge; Sanzo Nosaka—Chairman of the Communist Party of Japan; E. Papaioannou—General Secretary of the Progressive Party of Working People (AKEL) of Cyprus; D. N. Pritt QC; and C. Rajeswara Rao—General Secretary of the Communist Party of India.

In addition, guest speakers who gave greetings at the reception included Lady Jennie Lee; Norman Atkinson MP; Alan Sapper—General Secretary of the Association of Cinematograph, Television and allied Technicians; Ernie Roberts—Assistant General Secretary of the Amalgamated Union of Engineering Workers; and Robert Bonnar—Executive Committee Member of the National Union of Railwaymen.

Greetings from many trade unions in the 'Golden Jubilee Souvenir' included those from the Transport and General Workers' Union; the Association of Cinematograph, Television and allied Technicians; the Associated Society of Locomotive Engineers and Firemen; the Amalgamated Union of Building Trade Workers; the Amalgamated Society of Boilermakers, Shipwrights, Blacksmiths and Structural Workers; the Constructional Engineering Union; the Draughtsmen's and Allied Technicians' Association; the Fire Brigades Union; the Kent Miners; the National Society of Operative Printers and Assistants; the National Union of Public Employees; the National Graphical Association (London Region); the Scottish Commercial Motormen's Union; the Scottish Miners; the South Wales Miners; and the Watermen, Lightermen, Tugmen and Bargemen's Union.

The greetings which follow include some received too late for publication in the 'Golden Jubilee Souvenir':

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## HUGH SCANLON
**President of the Amalgamated Union of Engineering Workers**

Dear Mr Palme Dutt,

Let me record my appreciation, not only of the service to the working class that *Labour Monthly* has given, but to yourself for the long years of constructive political analysis you have been able to present to us all. I first recall you in 1939 and later at the 'People's Convention' in the Royal Hotel, London. Much water has passed under the bridge since then and much has still to be achieved before we establish the type of society for which we were then, and still are, fighting. Best wishes in your endeavours.

## ACADEMICIAN FEDOSEYEV
**Director of the Institute of Marxism-Leninism, Moscow**

Dear Comrade Palme Dutt,

The Institute of Marxism-Leninism congratulates you on the fiftieth anniversary of *Labour Monthly* under your uninterrupted direction, and wishes you, steadfast defender of revolutionary theory, firm health and new successes in the struggle for the interests of the working class and all working people.

(A longer message has been received at the same time from the Institute of Marxism-Leninism.)

## LUIGI LONGO
**General Secretary of the Communist Party of Italy**

Dear Comrade Palme Dutt,

On the occasion of your seventy-fifth birthday and the fiftieth anniversary of the founding of *Labour Monthly*, the journal directed by you with such dedication and intelligence, I wish to communicate to you the most affectionate congratulations of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Italy and of myself personally. We recognise and appreciate the great creative contribution which your journal and you yourself have made to the publication and study of Marxism and of the most important problems confronting the working class, the communists and the progressive forces of Great Britain, the capitalist countries and the world in general. We hope that you may go on for many, many years making your contribution to *Labour Monthly* and that the journal will continue to prove itself one of the most interesting voices in the Marxist field. With most cordial greetings.

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Throughout the world friends of *Labour Monthly* will welcome the opportunity to have this permanent record of its fifty years unbroken service to the labour movement

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This special souvenir of *Labour Monthly*'s Golden Jubilee includes the History of Fifty Fighting Years by R. Page Arnot and articles by R. Palme Dutt and Allen Hutt; illustrations and cartoons from the earliest issues of *Labour Monthly*; and Greetings from notable personalities at home and abroad, and from organisations of the trade union and labour movement

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## CHEDDI JAGAN
**General Secretary of the People's Progressive Party of Guyana**

There must be few publications, and fewer personalities, anywhere in the world to surpass or even equal the record of *Labour Monthly* and its editor, R. Palme Dutt, of fifty years of unbroken advocacy of the principles of Marxism-Leninism and of national liberation. When others wearied of the fight and fell by the wayside, *Labour Monthly* was always there to spell out, for the benefit of the workers, the motives behind each imperialist move, and often to sound the first warning alerting the workers to the dangers ahead. Countless times in the past half-century of publication it has proved to be right in its interpretation of the social effects of events on the lives of people. I have known the editor for very many years and today his writings are as vibrant and forceful as in the early years following the establishment in the USSR of the first workers' government in history. His influence, expressed through *Labour Monthly*, has made itself felt in all parts of the world and in many languages. In congratulating him and *Labour Monthly* on reaching this milestone I express the hope that he will be spared for many more years to continue his lifelong fight against imperialism.

## WILLIAM KASHTAN
**General Secretary of the Communist Party of Canada**

It gives us great pleasure to greet *Labour Monthly* on its fiftieth anniversary. There is no other English speaking magazine that has done so much to clarify events from a Marxist-Leninist point of view in our country as in others, and add to the adherents of socialism. *Labour Monthly* is of course identified with R. Palme Dutt who has put his imprint on its pages and used his sharp pen to expose capitalism, its hangers on and show the way forward at every stage of the struggle. Our Party would like to add its voice to countless others in wishing Comrade Dutt all the best on his seventy-fifth birthday and many more years of fruitful and creative work for our common cause. The fiftieth anniversary of *Labour Monthly* coincides with the deepening crisis of imperialism and particularly of British imperialism. It coincides too with the mighty upsurge now evident in the British working class—a portent of the fact that, far from becoming obsolete, the working class is forging the weapons of democratic and socialist advance. In this forward movement *Labour Monthly* will continue to play its honourable role.

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**MEIR VILNER**
**General Secretary of the Communist Party of Israel**

Dear Comrade Palme Dutt,

Our greetings on your seventy-fifth birthday are addressed to the friend—the great friend—of our Party and of many of us who had the opportunity of knowing you, especially since our XIII Congress when you led the fraternal delegation of your Party. We love you as a warm-hearted man and loyal comrade, and everybody who had the chance to meet you cherishes the memory of the meeting. Our greetings are addressed to the outstanding Marxist-Leninist, the principled internationalist, the veteran leader of the British and international working class and communist movement, who has, from month to month, helped generations of progressive people to reach a better and deeper understanding of the historic process. We admire how you combine the wisdom of age with the youthful creativeness of your approach, so that your analysis of a problem, your description of a development becomes highly revealing and enriching at the same time. We wish you many more years so that you may see the further advance of the forces of peace and socialism in your country and in the world, knowing that you have done your part in accelerating this advance.

**COSTAS KOLIYANNIS**
**First Secretary of the Communist Party of Greece**

For fifty years *Labour Monthly* has played an important role in exposing imperialism and highlighting the struggles of the peoples for national liberation, socialism and communism. Greek communists are proud to be associated with its anniversary celebrations and wish it every success in the future.

**JOHN GOLLAN**
**General Secretary of the Communist Party of Great Britain**

My heartfelt congratulations on the fiftieth anniversary of *Labour Monthly*. It is difficult to single out any one contribution made by *Labour Monthly* for Marxism, socialism and peace, as more important than any other. But if I had to make the difficult choice I would decide the fight of the journal for national liberation throughout the world—a cause with which the editor, Palme Dutt, personally has always been associated.

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**ABE MOFFATT**
**President of the National Association of Old Age Pensioners**

As a reader of *Labour Monthly* for many long years, I have much pleasure in sending my personal congratulations to the journal on this Golden Jubilee. No one can doubt the important part played by *Labour Monthly* throughout those years on the need for unity of the British working class and its consistent policy in the fight for peace and social progress. Whilst Comrade Dutt will no doubt agree that the success of *Labour Monthly* has been a collective effort on the part of many outstanding personalities in the labour movement, nevertheless I am sure we all appreciate the outstanding services rendered by the editor himself. His work as editor of *Labour Monthly* has helped many of us in the labour and trade union movement and his work, as expressed in *Labour Monthly* and in many other aspects of activity, has played a very important part in the development of the labour movement and at all times carried out a consistent class policy on all national and international events. May *Labour Monthly* grow from strength to strength and may the editor have many more years on the good fight for unity, peace and socialism.

**BETTY SINCLAIR**
**Secretary of the Belfast and District Trades' Union Council**

I am delighted to know that *Labour Monthly* will celebrate its Golden Jubilee and right proud you will be to do so. The contribution made by the journal is both tangible and intangible. It can and cannot be measured as its lessons will be useful for all time—as well as serving the day to day needs of the people of Britain and the rest of the world. As an Irishwoman, I want to specially thank you and all connected with *Labour Monthly* for their help and active understanding of the problems of our people. May your Golden Jubilee celebrations mark a further milestone on your road.

**BORIS POLEVOI**
**Editor of *Yunost* (Youth), Moscow**

I know and respect your journal, and know too its editor as one of the outstanding thinkers of the socialist movement. Please convey to Comrade Palme Dutt and to the journal the most cordial greetings from the editorial board of *Yunost* and from me, the aged editor of that journal. And may, in its second half-century, both your journal and its present deeply respected editor continue their noble work of fighting for the realisation of the brightest ideals of mankind.

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**JESSICA SMITH**
**Editor of *New World Review*, New York**

*Labour Monthly*'s unbroken fifty years of publication may well be a record for a socialist journal published in a capitalist country. Contributors during this half-century reflect the range and depth of progressive thought and action in Britain and world wide. The breadth of participation in no way contradicts, but rather highlights, *Labour Monthly*'s consistent editorial position adhering to the principles of Marxism-Leninism, class solidarity and internationalism. Indeed, one of its unique contributions has been the combining of broad progressive co-operation with forthright stands for the revolutionary socialist perspective; and this not narrowly conceived, but as reflected in all realms of human life and thought. Fifty years ago I met Palme Dutt in England, when I was there attending for a few days the Labour Research Conference of that year. Ever since, I have held *Labour Monthly* to be the most important and valuable of all international publications, and Palme Dutt's editorials a constant guide and source of wisdom through all the turbulent and terrible and glorious years of this half-century of history. We wish *Labour Monthly* and its editor many more years of fruitful work in the common cause of progressive mankind.

**GEORGE MATHEWS**
**Editor of the *Morning Star***

In congratulating *Labour Monthly* on an achievement which is unique in so many respects, I want to pay particular tribute to its work for left unity. The roll-call of contributors over the years is itself impressive testimony to the journal's role as a platform for spokesmen of the left. It has consistently argued the case for unity between Communists, left Labour people, militant trade unionists and all who want to fight Toryism and move toward socialism. The British labour movement would have been saved a great many set-backs, and the British people much suffering, if this policy had been adopted. But there have been considerable advances, and the work of *Labour Monthly* over fifty years has contributed in no small measure to them. All concerned with the need for a healthy and vigorous left press in Britain will congratulate R. Palme Dutt and *Labour Monthly* on its fiftieth birthday, and wish it well for the future.

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**CORRECTION**

In our June issue the references on p. 253 to the 'Race Relations Bill' should of course have been to the Immigration Act.

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# A WRITER IN THE IDEOLOGICAL JUNGLE

James Aldridge

IT has been obvious for some time that we are living in an era when almost every art is devoted exclusively to telling us what life *feels* like, rather that what life is. And in a peculiar way this has seeped through into ideology itself. This explains a great deal of the artistic and ideological jungle we live in. And the problem for the writer (or for anyone else) is to cut some sort of a path through the tangled mess.

I believe that this search for the individual *feeling* of life, rather than the comprehension of it, began after the first world war. Originally it was a progressive necessity. The first world war had turned men into mere things. The individual simply did not exist in the kind of slaughter that cost millions of lives to win a hundred yards of terrain. And for what? French soldiers went into attack deliberately baa-ing like sheep because that was what they felt they had become.

The reaction to this, artistically, was the emphasis on the intense right of the individual to exist, to feel, to express himself as an individual. This is the real root, for instance, of the great upsurge of abstract art, which was really a highly individualistic art expressing specifically what an individual felt, and claiming the right of the individual to express himself in a highly personal way. Literature followed the same pattern with Joyce, Hemingway, Dos Pasos, D. H. Lawrence, and even with Thomas Mann and André Gide. The intense individualism in the art and literature of the 1920s and 1930s was a valid rescue operation.

But there came a moment after the second world war when this intense individualism turned into its opposite. By then bourgeois society had finally realised that it had no future, so it looked around desperately for a means of survival. By then, any kind of social thinking had become dangerous, whereas individual self-interest was safe. Originally, the bourgeoisie despised abstract art. Later they considered it their own. Why? Simply because in its final development this intense individualism in art and literature actually began to isolate the artist and the individual from society. It thus turned into a rescue operation for the bourgeoisie themselves.

In this context, we have been encouraged to push wide open all the doors of individual perception. There is no limit to it, providing

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we do it alone and always feel alone and turn it primarily on our own personalities.

Unfortunately life is not made up of a simple movement from one thing to another in clear-cut divisions. One thing always overlaps the other, and what we have inherited now is the confusion of an overlapping period when it is still vital for the individual to be rescued, but at the same time his rescue is being confused with attitudes which are, in fact, the last effort of the bourgeoisie to cut man down to a safe size by isolating him.

Additionally, the emergence of Freud as a sort of second Christ has also created the intense sexual individual, which fits perfectly into this pattern of intensity. In fact the intense sexual individual has now become the only acceptable kind of individual in literature and drama. And what is he doing to our sexual personality? Like primitive society which needed erotic rituals in order to achieve adequate sexuality for reproduction, we are going through a ritual of bourgeois sexual erotica. Is pornography a liberation? Or is it really the last orgasm of an emasculated bourgeoisie?

The sparkling nature of a lot of this intense individualism is particularly attractive to youth. Youth's unformed personality desperately wants to find a way for personal expression. What the bourgeoisie have done is to capture youth (or try to) by a deception. Youth revolts, youth wants better values, youth wants to find a new and honest morality for itself. These are valid. But the bourgeoisie are now persuading youth that the only way to find these things is to search their own personality for them, to indulge (with halucinogens if necessary) all their raw sensibilities, and to push themselves to the extremes of personal perception in sex, politics and art.

On the pinnacle of this kind of permissiveness are the true chorus masters of it—the bourgeoisie themselves. And nothing is safe from them. *Anti-capitalism?* The *Times* in its recent series of leading articles on Britain said that our society (by implication our capitalist society) is guilty of ugliness, commercialism, dark and palsied materialism, racial prejudice, dehumanisation, family isolation, boredom, dullness, etc., etc. *Marxism?* Mr Charles Curran, the head of the BBC, is reported recently to have said: 'We are all Marxists now.' *Revolution?* Watney's, the British brewers, have just launched a beer-selling campaign with the red revolution as its attraction, with pictures of Mao, Khrushchov and Castro ten times life size all over the London billboards.

It all looks pretty good.

The truth is that it is no longer frightening to be anti-capitalist,

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Marxist or revolutionary. They are all being neatly absorbed into the blotting paper. So the real problem is to decide what is real anti-capitalism, what is real Marxism, and what is truly revolutionary apart from drinking Watney's beer.

For the writer, the problem begins with the individual in this jungle, because the individual leads him to the problem of society itself. How does a writer deal with both? How does a writer fit one into the other? The ideal balance for literature is not only to portray what life feels like, but what it is. The trouble now is that the emphasis is so much on individual feeling and sensation and touch that social comprehension is not allowed to rear its ugly head.

Yet there never was a time when comprehension was so necessary in art. We need thought, but we get touch. Again and again, the bourgeoisie make sure that we confuse the investigation of self with the investigation of society. And a writer trapped in this jungle of self becomes hopelessly lost in the internal darkness of pure personality. This search for every nerve, for every response, for every scar and pain and minute variation in the individual will never get us out of the jungle.

Unfortunately the writer is particularly vulnerable in this jungle because it is the writer's job to investigate himself and to enlarge his perception and to look at all pain. But the writer must also ask himself what is at stake. I think the failure of the writer to ask himself that question has almost caused the death of the novel. The novel should be larger than truth, and more valid than fact. It should feel, but it should also comprehend. Where is the comprehension now? On the whole, the modern novel has become isolated, like the individual, like sex, into its pettiest and most lying form: into a search for pure experience.

These are harsh words, but the only way to save the novel or any art is to be harsh with it now. The real crisis is not in the art, but in the artist. We can see this in America's most talented and interesting writer, Norman Mailer. Mailer has always been in the forefront of writers who have believed in the intense personality. His first novel *The Naked and the Dead* was probably the best American novel of the war, and it was good because it went much farther than the narrow personality. But after the war Mailer began to investigate himself in novel form, and he carried it to such a point that his personal life became as intense and as incredible as the lives of his fictional characters. When Mailer finally discovered that there was a limit to this self-investigation, he began to look

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at the reality of American life, in particular the Vietnam war and the barbed-wire tapestry of American politics.

The result? He seems to have decided that fiction or literature is simply not adequate for it. Why? Obviously because he still thinks of literature only in the form of the intense personality, of the utmost, isolated individual. He cannot see fiction in any larger and wider context. It is a great pity, because if he could abandon his singular view and agree that fiction only comes to life when it tries to comprehend society, he would recover his belief in his art.

It seems to me that the only way for a writer to get out of this jungle of the intense individual is the route that takes him towards comprehension of society. Sensibilities, yes. Personality, yes. The individual, yes. But only *en route* to measuring and understanding what is happening to society, and that means only one thing today. Meanwhile, intense individualism is pouring itself deeper and deeper into a smaller and smaller hole. The end is a pin-head somewhere in hell. That is not art, it is not literature, and it is not ideology. It is, at best, medieval religion.

"THE KING GIVES UP £5,000 A YEAR"

The Income of the King, apart from the £15,000 from the Duchy of Lancaster, which is to be realised, is £470,000 per year

Reproduced from *The Communist*, August 20, 1921

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# MARXIST THEORY IN THE WORLD OF ART

Alan Bush

ABOUT twenty years ago a definitive collection of the writings of Karl Marx and Frederick Engels on art and literature, occupying 610 pages[1], was published by the *Henschelverlag* in East Berlin. Since then the *Henschelverlag* has published nearly one thousand books by leading Marxist and progressive writers and scientists, of which a considerable number (eine betrachtliehe Anzahl) deal with art and its problems from the standpoint of Marxism[2]. An annotated bibliography on Marxism and aesthetics, 262 pages long and covering all countries of the world, was published in the US in 1968[3]. In this remarkable book the entries from Great Britain alone occupy no less than 30 pages; Germany and Austria together are covered in 10 pages, the US in 73 and the USSR in 65.

In the face of this evidence of so much thought and study on the part of the founders of Marxism as well as of communists of the present day, including practising artists such as Brecht, Picasso, Shostakovich and Visconti, it is irrational to belittle the work of Marxist thinkers in the elucidation of artistic problems.

The creation of a work of art is a complicated process. In the contradictory society of imperialist Europe and America serious non-Marxist thinkers are beginning to raise doubts as to whether some of the works produced during the present century, which purport to be works of art, can be correctly so described. Recently this question was cynically answered by Professor Marshall McLuhan in the following definition: 'Art is anything you can get away with[4].' The great conductor, Professor Ernest Ansermet, in a lecture delivered in London in 1964, said the following: 'No one is able to say exactly under what conditions music emerges from sounds, or, if you wish, under what conditions does the sounding event really give place to a musical event?'[5] His treatise, *Les Fondements de la Musique dans la Conscience Humaine*[6], gives his technical and philosophical answer to this question, an answer which excludes

[1] Marx-Engels, *Ueber Kunst und Literatur*. (Berlin, *Henschelverlag*, 1950)
[2] Kunst und Gesellschaft, *Aufsaetze und Selbstzeugnisse*, p. 7. (*Henschelverlag*, 1970)
[3] Baxendall, *Marxism and Aesthetics*. (New York, *Humanities Press*, 1968)
[4] McLuhan, *The Medium is the Message*, p. 132. (London, *Allen Lane*, 1967)
[5] Ansermet, *The Crisis of Contemporary Music*, Recorded Sound, January, 1964. (London, *British Institute of Recorded Sound*)
[6] Ansermet, *Les Fondements de la Musique dans la Conscience Humaine*. (Neuchatel, *Editions de la Baconniere*, 1961)

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from musical art those works which are constructed in defiance of the fact that the material of music, the musical tones, possess within themselves certain inescapable relations of pitch, which range them into a hierarchy of intervals, thus providing the composer with a structure, known as tonality, the recognition of which is as essential to musical art as is, for example, the recognition of the fact of gravitation at the earth's surface to the design of an aeroplane which will successfully rise from the ground.

There are no doubt Marxist and non-Marxist theoreticians and artists, both in the capitalist and socialist worlds, who would disagree with both these statements. In one of his marvellous essays on 'Italian Painters of the Renaissance', written in 1907, Bernard Berenson disposed of Professor McLuhan before the latter was born by defining works of art as follows: 'All the arts are compounded of ideated sensations, no matter through what medium conveyed, provided they are communicated in such wise as to produce a direct effect of life-enhancement[7].' In a preface, written in 1952, Berenson writes of 'works of pretended art' and finishes as follows: 'No artifact is a work of art if it does not help to humanise us[8].' Without art, visual, verbal and musical, our world would have remained a jungle. The supporters of atonality in music have not, as far as I am aware, bothered to reply to Professor Ansermet; indeed his lectures and treatise have been ignored in the West where present-day musical theory has rarely risen above the low level of an unprincipled eclecticism. Indeed, with one exeption, namely Deryck Cooke's *The Language of Music*, the field is wide open.

Among the general problems in the world of art with which Marxism has to deal, the following are the most fundamental:

(1) the function of art in any particular historical and social circumstances, whether in tribal society, in an antique civilisation such as Ancient Egypt, in Classical Greece, in feudal society, capitalist or socialist society, or in the new independent states of Africa, Asia and South America;
(2) the position of the artist in these various social conditions, and especially his or her class approach, whether conscious or unconscious;
(3) the process of artistic communication, to whom, in class society to what patron or class, and how it is achieved in the national and cultural conditions of the particular society;
(4) artistic creation and the freedom of the artist;
(5) the way in which art can help or hinder man to change the world;
(6) the style or tendency of a specific work of art, past or present, and

[7] Berenson, *Italian Painters of the Italian Renaissance, Vol. I*, p. 103. (London and New York, *Phaidon Press*, 1968)
[8] *Ibid.*, p. xi.

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whether this helps or hinders it to perform a progressive or reactionary function today;

(7) the evaluation of specific works of art within their genre, and the evaluation of the various genres from a socialist standpoint (this latter is an extremely important problem which faces the ministries of culture in socialist countries);

(8) art education among children;

(9) art education in colleges of art, where future professional artists and teachers of art are trained;

(10) the organisation of amateur artistic activity;

(11) the organisation of the presentation to the public of literature, the theatre, including opera and ballet, the cinema, music, painting, sculpture.

The problems under the last four headings are vitally important in socialist countries, as they involve questions of priority. Not every desirable artistic activity or performance is practicable at any particular place or time and a process of selection is inevitable, and this will continue to be so at least until the state of communism has been reached. The solution will be sought in each case in accordance with the answers to the questions raised under the headings, five, six and seven.

The general questions under headings, one, two and three were first dealt with after Marx and Engels by Plekhanov in 1912 in his *Art and Social Life*[9]. His exposition of the development of romanticism in France, as the bourgeoisie in the early nineteenth century forsook the ideals of their revolution of 1789, has an almost prophetic ring: 'Fantastic dress, like long hair, served the young Romantics as a means of counterposing themselves to the hated bourgeois.'

Question four, the freedom of the artist, is endemic in both capitalist and socialist societies. This was first dealt with by Lenin in 1905 in the article 'Party Organisation and Party Literature', when he wrote: 'There is no question that literature is least of all subject to mechanical adjustment or levelling, to the rule of the majority over the minority[10].' And further on: 'We want to establish and we shall establish a free press, free not simply from the police but also from capital, from careerism, and what is more, free from bourgeois-anarchist individualism[10].' It should be noted that Lenin here proposes that the literature of the proletarian party cause is 'least of all subject to mechanical adjustment or levelling', *not that it is not subject to it at all.* With an unerring acumen he pointed to the ever recurrent danger of bourgeois-anarchist individualism. At that time in Russia and in capitalist countries today professional artists nearly all come from bourgeois or petty-bourgeois family

[9] Plekhanov, *Art and Social Life*, p. 174. (London, *Lawrence & Wishart*, 1953)

[10] Lenin, *On Literature and Art*, pp. 24 and 25. (Moscow, *Progress Publishers*, 1967)

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backgrounds; even after they have come to accept Marxism as their world outlook, the influence of this ideology of unbridled individual freedom under the banner of which they received their training and entered upon their life-work as creative artists is deeply rooted and very hard to overcome.

In the Soviet Union Lenin's writings were followed shortly after by those of Maxim Gorky, and then by a voluminous literature, little known in this country.

We in Great Britain have every reason to be proud of our contribution. In 1936 Ralph Fox wrote *The Novel and the People*[11] and Christopher Caudwell *Illusion and Reality*[12] and the essay on 'Beauty' in *Further Studies in a Dying Culture*[13]. The achievement of these books was truly extraordinary. In the preface by Jack Beeching to Ralph Fox's book it is described as 'a pioneer work, . . . a splendid example of the Marxist method conscientiously applied to a new field.' Caudwell's *Illusion and Reality* was described in the biographical note by Professor George Thomson as follows: 'This is one of the great books of our time. . . . It is the first comprehensive attempt to work out a Marxist theory of art, and, while some parts of the argument will doubtless be modified by further research, it is as a whole a permanent contribution to the subject, destined to to become a classic.' Both authors discuss formalism and realism, romanticism, and the problem of form and content with a profundity which has not so far been surpassed by British Marxists. But there have been valuable works produced by John Berger on art, Arnold Kettle, A. L. Morton and Alick West on literature, especially on the novel, A. L. Lloyd on folk-music and George Thomson on poetry and the theatre in Ancient Greece.

One of the greatest difficulties facing British Marxists is bound up with the problem of building a mass party in Britain. As Caudwell wrote: 'The bourgeoisie floods the world with art products of a baseness hitherto unimaginable[14].' Many of these are popular among the workers and working class youth, from whom our future party members will be drawn. In the world of music the Beatles with their maudlin sentiment and kittenish eroticism became millionaires within five years, a financial achievement unrivalled by either Puccini, Richard Strauss or Stravinsky in their whole lifetimes, yet they were the most successful operatic and concert-

[11] Ralph Fox, *The Novel and the People*. (London, *Cobbett Press*, 1948)
[12] Christopher Caudwell, *Illusion and Reality*. (London, *Lawrence & Wishart*, 1946)
[13] Christopher Caudwell, *Further Studies in a Dying Culture*. (London, *Bodley Head*, 1949)
[14] *Ibid.*, p. 107.

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music composers of this century. There is a great temptation to try and find something of positive value in the artistic achievement of the Beatles, so as not to alienate the potential YCLers. There is even a temptation in the interest of 'broadness' to assume that a particular work of art must have something good in it, if it enjoys immense success with the public. A moment's reflection will dispel this illusion. During the post-war period the two most successful theatre pieces have been Noel Coward's 'Blithe Spirit' and Agatha Christie's 'The Mousetrap', surely among the most worthless productions conceivable from an artistic viewpoint.

In conclusion it appears that Marxism as a guide to action for the artist challenges him to make the life of man the content of his work, directly or indirectly, and to find a form adequate to this aim by means of which the content can be unmisunderstandably communicated to the audience for whom the work is designed. Marxism challenges the artist to present man in his entirety, not man in his most repulsive aspect as with the fashionable society portrait-distortions of Francis Bacon, or in his feeble, socially unconscious petty fiddlings and frustrations as you find him in Harold Pinter—to name two highly successful bourgeois artists—but man in his determined struggle to make himself the master of a social organisation in which science and art will be the possession of all, and he will himself be no longer an exploiter or an object of exploitation.

## *LABOUR MONTHLY* FIFTY YEARS AGO

'Black Friday' will be long remembered in the British labour movement, not merely as the day on which the big guns of the Triple Alliance failed to go off, but as the day on which with startling clearness the weakness and pitiful inadequacy of the British labour movement stood suddenly revealed. . . . The citadel of capitalism will not fall at a blast of trumpets or the sound of a big voice; it will fall only to sustained and courageous assaults, in which many casualties are bound to occur. As long as labour is led by men who are determined not to be in the casualty lists, capitalism is safe from its assaults. . . . It is not worth while to use 'revolutionary' means for purely reformist ends, although it is clear that, under present conditions, reforms can only be secured, if at all, by revolutionary means. The moral lies, not in a useless contradiction of means to fit the smallness of the aims; for reformist means have already been found wanting. It lies in the expansion of aims which will make the means worth while. That, and the truth about the inevitable severity of the struggle, is the truth that must be learned during the coming period of preparation. And, if 'Black Friday' helps to make the lesson easier, it will not, disastrous as it was, have been unmixed evil for British labour.

(From ' "Black Friday" and After', by G. D. H. Cole, *Labour Monthly*, July 1921)

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# THE SCIENTIFIC AND TECHNICAL REVOLUTION

Professor Jürgen Kuczynski

THE industrial revolution started in England about 200 years ago. Its pivotal process consisted of production with the help of machine tools, or working machines as they were also called at that time. The machine replaced the hand that guided the tools. This first occurred in one of the consumer goods industries, namely the textile industry. The effects on other industries were pronounced. The whole of society was changed in the course of the industrial revolution.

The world has become the scene of a scientific and technological revolution today. Its pivotal process consists of production accomplished with complex and full automation. Automation is replacing the hand that guides the machines. The arms industry is wellnigh the only place where the scientific and technological revolution has been playing a part up to now. Its effects on the civilian industry have been very slight. S. Melman has formulated very clearly for the United States the reasons why we are still, for the time being, advancing along the road of the industrial revolution in the sector of civilian production and boosting productivity with old-fashioned means of scientific and technological progress: 'The nation cannot have more than half of its scientific and engineering research talent engaged in military research and expect to have a competent civilian industry.'[1]

The following facts demonstrate the part the arms industry is playing in the world today: 1. At the world level, armament is currently devouring approximately seven per cent of the gross national product—but the labour of about 50 per cent of all scientific and engineering personnel. 2. On each product worth 100 dollars, over 50 dollars will have been spent for research and development if it happens to be a military product, whereas not even five dollars will have been put into its research and development if it has been designed for civilian use. 3. This means that the arms industry is presently employing science and technology to a degree which is at least ten times as intensive as that to which they are being used

[1] Seymour Melman, *After the Military-Industrial Complex?*, in *Science and Public Affairs, Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists*, March 1971, p. 9.

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in civilian production. One can also compile the following table:

| | |
|---|---|
| Military forces as a percentage of the adult population | 6 per cent |
| Arms expenditure as a percentage of the gross national product | 7 per cent |
| Percentage of all scientific and engineering personnel employed for armament purposes | over 50 per cent |
| Percentage of all expenditures on research and development for armament purposes | over 60 per cent |

No wonder that under these circumstances the military destructive force has developed far, far more in recent decades than the civilian productive force. No wonder that we were hitherto able to speak of a scientific and technological revolution primarily in the arms industry.

Whereas productivity (or rather destructiveness=the destructive force times the range of destruction) increased by percentages that ran into thousands and, indeed, tens of thousands, per worker employed and hour of employment during the last quarter of a century, productivity in the US civilian industry developed as follows per worker and hour of employment (manhour):

**Increase in Productivity in Manufacturing[2]**

| | |
|---|---|
| 1890-99 — 1900-09 | 15.1 per cent |
| 1900-09 — 1910-19 | 20.8 per cent |
| 1910-19 — 1920-29 | 42.7 per cent |
| 1920-29 — 1930-39 | 32.8 per cent |
| 1930-39 — 1940-49 | 23.1 per cent |
| 1940-49 — 1950-59 | 26.8 per cent |
| 1950-59 — 1960-69 | 32.1 per cent |

If we compare the pace at which productivity per manhour increased during the fifties and sixties with that of the twenties and thirties, we will find that the rate of increase is rather lower than higher. Where is the so-called scientific and technological explosion in civilian industry? It has not happened. Individual branches of, and enterprises in, civilian industry apart, productivity has been raised with the customary methods of scientific and technological progress that have been in use for the last 200 years. In other words a comparison of the modern technologies used in military and civilian production indicates that technology is lagging behind very badly indeed in the latter. The magnitude of the divergence has never

[2] Source: *Long Term Economic Growth 1860-1965*. US Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census. Washington DC, 1966. 1890-1957, pp. 190 ff., A 165 NBER, Kendrick; 1957-1964, pp. 190 ff., A 166 Establishment Data BLS; *Statistical Abstract of the United States*, 1965-1970.

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yet been paralleled in history. This is illustrated by the above 'Increase in Productivity in Manufacturing' table and by the pace at which the factor 'Effective Destructiveness times Range' has grown in the military sphere.[3]

The military have long been spreading the opinion that the scientific and technological achievements performed for the arms industry are also of the greatest use for civilian industry. And the aircraft industry, for example, with its several thousands of modern aeroplanes has certainly derived some benefit from the technology employed in the over 100,000 military aircraft now in service. But here too the benefit has been an extremely limited one. N. V. Goetz has investigated the American aircraft industry in his *Forschungsökonomie in der Luftfahrtindustrie*[4] and reported that 1,487 of the 11,674 patents the US administration held in 1961 (85 per cent were classified) were released for civilian use, and that only 297, i.e. three per cent, were actually used by civil aviation. The findings of 'Hindsight', an investigation commissioned by the Pentagon into the links prevailing between the development of military and civilian techniques over the 1945-65 period, were nearly as meagre. They clashed with the opinions generally held in that they established that only about five per cent of the technological progress made in military production has also been introduced into civilian production. An enormously important and significant statement, particularly when it stems from that quarter. This means that it is out of the question that civilian production profited on any larger scale from the applied research carried out for, or the technology used by, the arms industry.

The Soviet Union, the whole socialist world, all the progressive forces of the human race, who are fighting for disarmament are naturally doing so to reach a principal goal of decisive significance for mankind today: the maintenance and consolidation of peace. Yet one needs to see another target in this context, an aim that will be reached with disarmament: the breakthrough of the scientific and technological revolution into the sphere of civilian industrial production. Indeed, this breakthrough will take place quite universally in all the civilian sectors of society and have the most pronounced and magnificent effects on the whole of social life. Up to now the monopolist military-industrial complex, the core of imperialism in the United States as in the Federal Republic of

[3] cf. J. Kuczynski, *The Connection between the Development of Science and Production*, in *Scientific World*, 5/1970, p. 12.
[4] Stuttgart, 1970.

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Germany and elsewhere, has still been strong enough to prevent not only disarmament, but an arms freeze as well. But no one can contest the fact that its position in relation to socialism has become considerably weaker than it was ten years ago.

*We shall approach the broadest introduction of the scientific and technological revolution in all spheres of social life to the extent to which we succeed in checking the monopolies and drawing nearer to the goal of disarmament. It will, of course, be introduced on this scale particularly in the socialist countries where all the preconditions obtain for the broadest implementation of the scientific and technological revolution.* Hence, we may link the accomplishment of disarmament with a forecast of entirely unprecedented rates of growth of productivity in production and, indeed, quite generally in all fields of social life. Accordingly, it will be possible to boost commodity production and increase leisure time as never before in the history of mankind.

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# BOOKS

**Soledad Brother**
The Prison Letters of George Jackson
*Jonathan Cape*, 290 pp., £2.50
*Penguin*, 290 pp., 35p

PENOLOGISTS IN BRITAIN and the United States have concluded, from long-term surveys, that a man who spends as much as ten years in prison invariably is turned into a broken and destroyed personality. Their conclusions certainly are based on confinement surveys of the common criminal or lawbreaker, and not on records of the political prisoner. Some of the most remarkable documents reflecting the indomitable human spirit have been produced by political prisoners both during and after prolonged incarceration.

George Jackson, who wrote these letters (they were not written for publication but compiled by friends, which makes their hot impact greater), is a black American who was thrown into the prisons of California in 1960 and is still there, facing indefinite confinement or death. Convicted initially for involvement in a petty theft, he was sentenced to the indeterminate penalty of 'one year to life' with the exact time of release depending on a parole board decision. Jackson, refusing to be brutalised by the vicious, racist California prison regime and fighting back against its white supremacist policies, was turned down year after year by the parole board because of his militant record, finally to be charged, out of random selection, with the death of a brutal white prison guard.

The letters are enormously impressive for the picture they provide of a man acquiring a revolutionary political consciousness out of his experiences in institutions that are compressed microcosms of the violent, degrading society that led him to commit the offense that brought him there. From a petty offender he is transformed into a political prisoner in every sense of the word, and his letters are among the purest cries for justice that have emerged from the

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struggle for black liberation in the United States.

Except for a brief autobiographical letter requested by Jackson's publisher, only a fraction of this correspondence deals with life in prison as such. Prison letters pass through censorship, and every prisoner learns to communicate by indirection. It is from the anger that seethes in these pages that we grasp the indignities and the sadistic maltreatment that George Jackson and his fellow black prisoners endure.

Most remarkable of all is the manner in which the author has overcome the solitary confinement and the heavily restrictive conditions he has experienced for over a decade, to become identified with and merged with the liberation struggles in the United States and internationally. He does not think of himself as alone but in fraternity with Vietnamese, Latin Americans and Africans in a common freedom struggle, and turns to the mastery of revolutionary theory the better to cope with the guards and the confining system.

Jackson's prison reactions closely parallel the growth of the black liberation movement in the United States, from civil rights campaign to Black Panther self-defence and rebellion. For all their cell-bound limitations, his letters epitomise that revolutionary upsurge, transcending mere prison correspondence. They often read like poems of the larger struggle rather than protests against confinement.

The fullest expression of Jackson's ideas as they evolve are sent to his attorney, Mrs Fay Stender, but the tenderest and the most passionate are to Angela Davis, who worked on his defence committee and who befriended his brother, Jonathan. It was Jonathan's armed attempt to free other black prisoners, in which he was killed, that brought the arrest and persecution of Angela Davis, an outcome that has linked George Jackson closer than ever to the whole struggle from his prison cell.

It is a revolutionary experience to read this book. Let the penologists read it before they make any further conclusions about what prisons do to people. WILLIAM J. POMEROY

**A Social History of the Third Reich**
Richard Grunberger
*Weidenfeld & Nicolson*, 536 pp., £5

THIS BOOK, the product of much labour and study, is just what its title calls it, a *social* history of Nazism. How far it is possible to write of any state a social history which is not also a political history may be doubted; but certainly the last state suitable for such an exercise must be the Third Reich. Still, Mr Grunberger has attempted it, and in many ways the can claim to have succeeded. I is a good book, giving a clear view of its social subject. But it must be in part frustrating and in part tantalising for most of us to see how he preserves it from giving any political history.

He cannot of course wholly exclude politics, any more than Shylock could have flesh without blood; but as one reads it one misses so much of the whole political picture of Nazism which one would like to read. Many readers would like to know what he thinks of two associated questions: what and how much the unchanged and brutal German ruling class, sitting there intact at all stages, did in the early thirties to establish Nazi rule and power, and what control it exercised at various stages over Nazi activities and policy in the twelve years of horror.

To the first of these questions Mr Grunberger devotes less than one page, and really contributes nothing,

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for he just states the problem without answering it. To the second he contributes nothing positively or specifically, but passively accepts the tacit assumption, familiar to all Tories and many social democrats, that the outwardly established governments govern and are not controlled or influenced by the ruling class but study only a rather vague public opinion. And in his description of Nazism itself he takes no very clear position (although he clearly hates it as much as I do); he writes of it as 'an equal measure of revolution and restoration', 'pseudo-revolutionary', 'the nationalist revolution', and 'the tainted progeny of German romanticism'.

Putting on one side these criticisms, and looking at the book itself, one finds that it begins with a good chapter on the Weimar Republic as the immediate predecessor of Nazism, and follows with two chapters which give a fairly general view; then it gives no less than 27 chapters each of which deals with some particular facet of life in the Third Reich. Read as a whole, the book, thus constituted, gives a pretty broad and comprehensive view of that life and of the horrors of Nazism, although there are a few gaps: there is, for example, nothing about the underground resistance (as distinct from merely passive 'going underground'), and very little about the Communist Party. Probably the best treatment of any subject is to be found in the chapter on the Jews and in the many other references to the Jews.

Apart from occasional passages that are a little too high-flown for pleasant reading—what, for example, is a 'cat's cradle of trip-wires'?—the book is well written, and is lightened by much wit and humour, not only in the chapter on Humour.

D. N. PRITT

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# EVERY WORD OF FIFTY YEARS

Of the items covered from time to time on this page, there is one unmistakably connected with our fifty years of publication. The material reminder of this fact is constantly at my side here in *LM*'s office: a much thumbed set of bound volumes of the journal.

During my brief time as Managing Editor the set has twice been temporarily depleted. To protect the valuable contents of some early volumes they were for a while removed and placed in the careful hands of our binder: those bindings now no longer match the age of the original set—but the pages are safe.

On another occasion, in error we confirmed orders from two different libraries for series of volumes which could not be filled from our stock, as we were short of one Volume 14 for 1932. Our office copy had to go. The next few months saw desperate appeals to readers to search for the missing month, February 1932, to enable us to bind a replacement set for that year. Since January I have been reminded of the Canadian reader who sent us the vital copy every time I looked up a 'Forty Years Ago' piece in 1932's dulled and worn (but original) neighbour. (From now on my eyes are more often to be on the fifty-year-old Volume 1.)

The same reader who gave us that marvellous February copy has recently sent a further parcel of copies saved over the years, one of several readers who have come to our aid with collections of *LM* of considerable value to us whenever we can complete annual sets for binding and sale. Their contribution ranks equally with contributors whose names appear below to ensure *LM*'s entry into a second half-century of participation in working class endeavour.

In less reflective and more immediate mood, we are able to report very useful sales of *LM* at the Draughtsmen's Conference and that of the Co-operative Union. More good efforts of this kind are promised at the many trade union conferences in July, for which additional volunteer sellers (ring 01-346 5135) would be welcomed. We hope this special issue will help to win many new subscribers during our Jubilee month. **Nicola Seyd**

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**President**

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**General Secretary**

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